

**Under the VTSS Umbrella:
Process Integration and School Schedules**

Session 3

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Under the VTSS Umbrella: Process Integration and School Schedules

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Designing Quality Elementary, Middle, and High School Schedules: Providing Structured Time for Intervention and Enrichment in a tiered System of Supports continued 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Dr. Michael Rettig, Professor Emeritus
James Madison University and
President of School Scheduling Associates

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Dr. Rettig: ...Test, test, test, oh. Okay, why don't we get started? Before we get going I have a little, it looks like a flash drive, a little flash drive. It says Quill.com, 4G Quill.com, blue, tiny thin little thing. Anybody missing it? Okay, okay, I've talked to this high school Garnet Valley about what they do here. They don't do everything that's on here, this is more my conceptual model of it. They will tell you that if kids don't choose wisely, or don't choose at all they lose their privilege to choose and they get assigned.

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Dr. Rettig: If a kid need an intervention it's required, you know, if they don't need that they have their own choice. They will tell you that some of their students that don't need interventions choose to go the same place every day. If I'm a band kid, I go to the band room with my buddies, and we maybe practice or maybe not. You know, if I'm an art student I go down to the art studio I do that, work on that. if I'm a computer geek I'm writing a new app for something down in the computer lab, I'm fine with that. you know, as long as they're doing something relatively productive. They don't need an intervention, there is a spot for it. We've got lots of opportunities for students for it. What I'd like to share with you now, you have a question? Yeah. Yes, the question was do they control the ratio. Yes it's arena scheduled, each thing on there has a class size limit. And when in the sign ups you reach the limit it closes, and then you got to sign up for something else.

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Dr. Rettig: So that's what arena scheduling is, you hit the limit. There is only 15 allowed in that US History intervention, boom it's closed and student just doesn't get it. Now what a wise school will do will have a way of tracking that. So they can see, we've had you know, every time our algebra one interventions fill up we better open up some more of that okay. Nobody is going to math club, get rid of that and add in another algebra intervention you know. You understand what I'm talking about, so the model you want with this is to have an electronic tracking mechanism to know how students are using it, and what you need. So that over time it can morph and change. it might stay this way for three or four weeks, three or four cycles. But as we need other things to occur during

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the school year we change some of the offerings. Not every six days, and like I said some schools that I know will do nine weeks, their ninth graders are in an orientation program during this period. They don't get to choose until the first nine week period is over, and then they're brought into the choice model as well.

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Dr. Rettig: We get near state testing, well some different kinds of things happen in here. It's registration time, and so instead of running a, having our counselors go to all English and social studies classes and do that. they run a grade level assembly, hand out the materials here, sing the song once, you know, for the grade level and do it in here. There is lots of different ways this can morph over the school year. Work with a, well let me tell this story first, and then I'll show you some other things other high schools have done with this. The first thing, I want to talk about a school that I think has done a very fine job of preparing for this period, and show you what they've done. And the school is Wissahickon High School, it's right outside of Philadelphia, and I don't want to scare you right away. This is their schedule okay, so this is a school that was in a nine period day.

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Dr. Rettig: They had I think nine 42 minute periods, one of which was lunch for the students. They were unhappy with the short periods. There were a lot of other things going on, they wanted some time for intervention. They had this tension I talked about earlier between their, certain departments who preferred frequency over duration, and other departments that preferred duration over frequency. And so here is their schedule. There are really three different ones, but the only thing that's different is the lunch period. So I'm just gonna focus on this one right here if you'll follow along with me. On day one, they run a six-day cycle. Day one kids can take eight courses in this by the way, and day one in the morning course one meets and then there is homeroom. And then two and three meet, there is no meeting of course four on day one. On day two course two, homeroom, three, four, there is no meeting of course one on day two. On day three course three, homeroom, four, one, there is no meeting of course two on day three.

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Dr. Rettig: And on day four, four, one and two, no three. So over the course of the four-day cycle each class meets three days out of four, you follow me? Fifty-eight minute class periods, that's what they are. The same thing is occurring in the afternoon. Five, six, seven, no eight, six, seven, eight, no five. Seven, eight, five, no six. Eight, five, six, no seven, on days five and six they go to an AB block schedule. Course one and two meet on day five, one and three meet on day five, and five and seven meet day five. Two, four, six and eight meet on day six, and on days five and six they shorten the blocks enough to create 48 minute IE period only on those days. So their IE period in this school only meets two days out of six-day cycle. Are you with me on that?

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Dr. Rettig: Here is a math question, how many class periods, how many times does each class meet every six days? Four, three 58-minute periods, and one 80-minute period okay. So their frequency is 120 meetings per year, okay. Two out of every three days; four out of every six days, they meet 120 times, that was their compromise in the frequency duration argument. Now I've showed you that, but now I want to show you a video that the school produced it was made by the school's TV class introducing the new schedule to their students. It's great. And by the way this is at the school's website, they have a website devoted to their new master schedule.

[Video - See Dr. Rettig's PowerPoint presentation]

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Dr. Rettig: ...Pretty awesome there didn't they, yeah I think it's great. It's a great introduction to it, it gives you some of the sense. I want to talk a little bit about the school's preparation for this period; they had a committee, departmental representation from every department, and they had students on the planning committee just for this period.

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Dr. Rettig: It's that intense, the work that has to be done to make it work well, and they had some criteria. They wanted to be able to, if you go to their website they have a variety of different things here, for example this is their IE deadlines for the fall. And what this is, this says that for our first and second IE cycles they'll be grade level activities. So they weren't going to be running the choice program for the first 12 days, but after that for the third and fourth IE cycles they were gonna open enrollment Saturday the 15th of September at seven, and it would close on Thursday the 20th, and that was the time you had to enroll in what you were gonna do for the four IE periods that were gonna occur in those two rotations. Am I making any sense here? These are their deadlines for student sign ups. The next thing that they have that's interesting is

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they have a list of their offerings for the year, and these, I'm not sure all these will happen.

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Dr. Rettig: But this is the brainstormed list of the various departments. This looks like the English department here, I'll just let you scan through it. You know, things they'll offer over the course of the year. Looks like the history department suggestion is next, you know, math, you know, a variety of other things. Science coming, all of this is at their website, the Wissahickon High School website. They have a master scheduling website, so there is all that stuff. They also, when they set out to design this, oh what do I want here? This is what I want I believe. This is on Prezi if you've ever seen that.

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Dr. Rettig: Come on, it's loading. This is about their planning for that period. Okay, come on Mike. How do I make it, there we go. So let's hit the first one here, and we know how to change this so we can see it here, what is IE? It tells you what IE is, tells what's happening. It tells the preparations, they had a committee, they made visitations to other schools; Sapphire is their school management and scheduling software. So they collaborated with the presenter of the vendor for that. They had the members of the committee, come on.

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Dr. Rettig: I wish I had this in a different format, I'm not having any trouble, come on, oh there we go. There was their IE committee, students, teachers, department chairs, the task, their vision was to offer enrichment, to offer remediation, and to offer learning interests. That was their vision, the task were to develop the vision, to come up with the offerings to do a sort of scope and sequence of offerings for each department throughout the year, and talk about the frequency and timeliness of the offerings too, what they were gonna need. Okay, and come on. We already saw that. I'm having trouble with this, it's the projection size I think.

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Dr. Rettig: ...These are the high schools they visited, Horace Greeley is in Chappaqua New York, Garnet Valley is the one in Philadelphia I talked about, Upper Dublin is also in the Philadelphia area. The Sapphire collaboration is what they were doing with their software company. So they wanted to make sure that they allowed the program allowed students to select offerings on a biweekly basis, that the teachers had the option to assign things into things before the students made their selections, you understand what I'm talking about there? The teachers could make things do things. That the schedule that they had real time open seat counts, so right, you know, they'd know what was gonna be open right away, and they could get all those reports. And they also want

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to be able to block students into, for whole group activities. Like a whole class or something like that into an activity for that purpose.

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Dr. Rettig: So all of those were their requirements they had of their software company, and you, I'll let you look at this on your own. So they did lots and lots of preparation. If you were to look again at the website there is a number of different things that might be, you might find useful and want to share with teachers in your buildings. And so, again Wissahickon High School outside of Pennsylvania all these things are devoted to it. Let me stop for a minute, and this is gonna look different in a middle school. Obviously this looks much different than in elementary school, any questions about this whole idea of the sort of high school IE period, and what it might possibly be? Or some of the concerns you have for it, or anything like that, how about a question? I mean it's scary amount of work. Yeah.

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Dr. Rettig: ...I'm assuming although I don't know that in the school that we've just been talking about it's a mix of both. I think students will go wouldn't you like to sponsor a, and they'll get one of their favorite teachers to do that for them. And suddenly it's an offering that they have, I'm sure that happened, but I also sure the teachers picked their own pet things that they wanted to do as well as the, the, the interventions that they knew they had to do for kids as well. So I, I'm, you know, they had kids in the planning committee, and my experience is it's always best when you have a, a schedule change project you're working on to involve students and to involve parents in it. It's one of those things where you're going to pay me now, or you're going to pay me later you might as well do it now you know. I think it's better to involve them along the way, and you'll have more ownership. I mean just that video would do a pretty good job of selling it to the student population in their school.

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Dr. Rettig: You know what I mean? Just the, the content of that, the way it was presented it's a little goofy parts that are fun, the kids are known to like them. I don't know it's a good sales marketing piece right there for, for the population. Somebody else with a question? There is about four or five big areas that you have to think about when doing this at their high school level. The first one is where is the time coming from? Okay, because to do a period like this it's gonna come out of something. You know, and so let me play around here a little bit with that, that idea, and we have a high school in here that does not have an intervention period right now. Don't, don't have, raise your hand if you're a high school without an intervention period. All the high schools have an intervention period here, do you? You do not, okay what kind of schedule is your basic schedule?

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Dr. Rettig: Eight, or seven courses? Seven, and do you have a single? So when does your school day begin? Eight o'clock, begins at eight o'clock, and when does it end? Two-forty, you got a short day, and so you've got six hours and forty minutes, or 400 minutes in your day. And just to get what you're current schedule is, do you have a separate homeroom period. Okay, and how much time do you put between classes? Seven minutes, so you run three blocks a period and a lunch is that right? Three blocks every day, a period, and lunch. But it's short. Yeah, yeah, so that's what I meant the period, and so if you have, what I'll say, you know, three blocks or three blocks and a period that's four and lunch.

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Dr. Rettig: So that means you need four transitions, so that would be 28 minutes for transitions. And how long is your lunch period? Twenty-eight minutes, and then let me just play around and see if I can figure out what your blocks are here. So let's say I'm just, let me just, this just adds up the time here. I've got to have three of those, and what if it were something like that. You know, you got more, your blocks are longer aren't they? Oh maybe the transitions aren't in my formula, no they are. Okay, not 100, I'm just guessing here. You can tell me how close I am when I'm done.... Something like that? Okay.

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Dr. Rettig: So all it does is add it up. Okay, now if we were gonna do an intervention period in your school might not happen every day by the way. Doesn't have to happen every day, but if we were gonna do one what do you think minimum length? Or what would you want it to be in your school if you were gonna do one? Thirty-five, forty minutes, let's take 40 minutes okay. So if we were gonna do an intervention period in your school that was gonna be 40 minutes in length, you know, so I'm, that means I'm gonna add an intervention period of 40 minutes. I don't want to screw up lunch too much here, so I'm gonna keep that 28, but that's gonna add another transition to my day too. To get there if I'm gonna really have a 40 minute one, so now I got 35 minutes in transitions, okay and now I have to figure out how long these blocks are gonna be here. So I've got 47 minutes I've got to get out of her right now. And oh, that's gonna be like 85, and let's see where we're going here.

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Dr. Rettig: ...Still over, yeah I'd probably do this.... Something like that, you understand what I'm doing here? I'm just trying to figure out what the numbers would be. Now you're gonna have, you got the department chair of math with you right now? No, no, are they here? But what, are you the department chair of math? No, but the department chair of math is gonna go, twelve minutes. No fourteen minutes, I'm not the department chair of minutes. Fourteen I've got to do some fast math, you know, I meet 90 times a year in that block and you're taking 14 minutes away each time. Ninety times fourteen is

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X number of minutes, which is divided by 60, X number of hours. And you're stealing that time from my basic instruction to do this stupid IE period.

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Dr. Rettig: I mean you know what I'm talking about? You might, you might hear a little of that. Okay, especially from the math department who can do the math on the change that you're offering here. Now I suppose you might hear something from the state department too if they really had schedule police, I don't think they do. Because you're going to be under the Carnegie Unit minute requirements for a course in the state of Virginia, 84 minutes versus 98 minutes, 98 minutes, you know, to get 140 hours in Virginia you got to have a 47-minute period, or a 94-minute block. And, and 47 minute daily period, 94 minute block every other day will get you the 140 hours but there are some schools in the state of Virginia that don't get that much, you know. I don't know, I'm not, I'm not recommending you violate the requirement, but I'm just talking. But you know, in some states like when I go to Wisconsin they don't have a requirement for Carnegie unit, they have a requirement for school. They actually say that the kids in the IE periods who need more time in their core subjects actually probably get more than they would get 98 minutes a day cause it's targeted right at them when they're going for 40 minutes for the IE period.

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Dr. Rettig: Well if I were gonna build this thing, if I were gonna build this thing you know, and you said the day starts at eight o'clock. Using my little template right here, by the way how many lunch periods do you need? Three, and so first period is your short period right? Okay, so if I would do, build this and we did our first period at I think I did 45 minutes, so let me just grab one of these here. I'm gonna quick build this, drop that here, this will be period one, and that's 45 is what I did. Then I got to put seven minutes between, so I'm gonna change this formula right, I think I'll do it this way. Change this formula to a two right, oh you know. I'll do it this way.

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Dr. Rettig: Change this formula to a seven right here, so that will be seven minutes between. And now my next block I think we said was gonna be 84. So let's go grab an 80, let's grab this and put it here. That's only 75, so let's do two more boxes and then merge across, and so this will be block two/three at 84, but I can change the formula here to a four, so it's only four minutes there. And then I'm gonna have another seven. Now I think I'd put the IE period, I might put the IE period right here. So I'm gonna go get that, I don't like putting the IE period at the beginning of the day. I don't like putting it at the beginning of the day. Some schools do it at the high school level, they'll put that period at the beginning of the day. And they'll say if you don't need an intervention you don't have to come to school. Now there are some students who like that, mostly the ones who need the intervention.

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Dr. Rettig: You know, and they don't come to school. It smells like punishment to everybody, you know what I'm, and the same thing is the case if you put it at the end of the day, and do something like that. It smells like punishment if you let kids leave and others have to stay for the intervention. And so I just don't, I know some schools do it because it's easier to handle, you know, you don't have to provide enrichment opportunities. They leave, you know, but I don't think it's what we want to do, and so I'm gonna put it, I like to put it in a middle period of the day. So it depends where it's gonna drop lunch too, so we're gonna do 40 minutes, and so I'm gonna just do eight boxes instead of nine boxes. Merge that across and this will be 40 okay, and now I want to get rid of the color there. So just copy and paste that, and now it's time to start, start lunch going on here.

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Dr. Rettig: Okay, let's grab my seven right here, and we'll make this the first lunch. I think you said it was 28 minutes right? And that's what we did, so I'm gonna grab the 30 and drop that right here for the first lunch, and I'm gonna change this to a three now here. That'll make that 28, three. Will it? Yeah, that'll make that 28, 110, 1110 to 1138, 28, and now I can grab this next block for this group and drop that here, and this will be the four/five block. Four/five block, and then I'll do it again and drop that here, and if my math is any good it ends at 2:40, and this is the six/seven block. Six/seven block, so that's lunch one, that's the easy one and let me get this little smaller now.

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Dr. Rettig: So we can see the whole thing, so this is lunch, lunch one, and then lunch three is easy too. This will be lunch two, and this is gonna be lunch three. Lunch two, and lunch three, lunch three I'm just gonna merge this here and essentially that's gonna be looking like this. I'm sure you break a block for some kids right? Is that right? You break a block for some students? Yeah, and then we'd have another lunch, and I'm not even gonna bother doing all the times perfectly in here. But it's gonna be somewhere around there, and then you know, I don't know. We end up cheating this block a little bit, if we don't add more minutes to it because there is two transitions around it. So you know, if I'm actually gonna put seven, maybe I'll only put five this time or something like that but this would be block, block four/five.

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Dr. Rettig: And you know, that's gonna be about 40 minutes, and this would be if I put two transitions in, and this would be actually I don't really have that many minutes. You know, I'd have to shorten the transitions, say it was something like that. maybe I'd have three six-minute transitions or something in that neighborhood. So it looks something like that, so I've worked with some schools that they'll do it that way. Now you could decide like this school in Virginia to not do it every day. For example at West Field High

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School in Fairfax for a number of years this was their schedule. Now their single period was last period, period seven do you see that right here, it's 50 minutes right there.

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Dr. Rettig: Single period was last period, and they ran six blocks, three blocks, three blocks alternating, and they ran four lunches out of third block. Four lunches out of third block, and that was the schedule for Monday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Tuesday and Friday they ran bulldog block, a lot of places I go, I was really surprised to hear that video when I first saw it that they called it, actually called it the IE period. Usually they give it their team mascots name, and call it, you know, bulldog block or whatever like that. So they shorten their morning blocks a little bit to get a 40-minute period, kind of like we just did. You know, two days a cycle you follow me on that? By the way if you go to their website the rules for bulldog block are at their website you can look at those. But this was their schedule for a couple of years. One of the concerns people would have is two days a week enough for the interventions we're trying to do?

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Dr. Rettig: And so that's their schedule now. They do bulldog block every day, okay. They're not just running it two times a week, they're running it every day. If you want to see the rules for their school and how they operate it they're right there. I want to share something else too. I worked with a school in, in New Jersey. It's the Cherry Hill Public Schools, and remember they had the eight period day where 30 percent of the kids in the district only took, took eight classes, and so they had no lunch. By the way if you, let me think here, file, share, what's your email? You what? What's your email?

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Dr. Rettig: Dot what? VBS? Oh tibs. Two Ts, is that right? [Inaudible, 00:36:27] there you go, okay.... Simple to do though. So what was I gonna do? Oh what was I gonna do before this? Oh, oh, oh yeah Cherry Hill, Cherry Hill.

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Dr. Rettig: So Cherry Hill is an interesting place, and you know, their kids are all taking all these classes cause they need to get to Penn and Harvard and Yale, and all that kind of stuff, and they wanted to do a new schedule. And so they needed some intervention time, and again we went through a two-year process. One-year preparation and decision, one year of research, study, visitation and decision making. And one year of preparation, by the way I, I've got a whole, if you're a high school looking to make a major change in a schedule, a major change, it is a two year process if you're going to do it right. One year to make the decision, one year to do it right, okay. And I have a handout that I can give you that goes through what I think the best steps are for that, and Cherry Hill it's the kind of, it's different than you I know than a lot of you.

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Dr. Rettig: But they are a skeptical audience, you know, there are some audience in high school that are skeptical about changing anything. And especially in a place where in that two high schools they probably had 80 kids a year that got a five on the BC Calc exam, so they think they pretty much got it you know. And so but we had some others, one of the high schools was right near Camden, had a lot of intervention needs. And so there is this debate back and forth between the schools, and we looked at some different models. We looked at an eight AB, we looked at an eight AB that added an IE period into it. We looked at an eight single periods block hybrid, three days periods, two days block. We looked at that same thing with an IE built in, and we looked at what I'm gonna call the Horace Greely model okay. And we did a study of those for a while, and then we had a little vote, straw pole of the committee, and two of the models were knocked out. The straight eight AB, the straight, the hybrid, eight period and block hybrid.

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Dr. Rettig: The other three, the eight AB with IE, this and the Horace Greely were still in the running, so they went out to visit some schools. They wen to Horace Greely, which is in Chappaqua, New York, which runs a schedule very similar to Wissahickon's to see what that was like, they have an IE period built in there too. They do some different things with it, and they went to a couple high schools in New Jersey, Mainland High School and another one that was more urban. And at Mainland High School they went and they saw something that was kind of interesting, the school didn't have an IE period. But they had done something else, and the thing they had done that was different, which you'll probably think is crazy, where is Mainland? Scheduling orientation, programs is that what I want? Yep. Oh there it is, here is their bell schedule.

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Dr. Rettig: It's a drop two, the kids take eight classes. It's the same morning rotation and afternoon rotation where they drop one. They didn't have the block day like Wissahickon, so we got one, two, three no four, four, one, two no three. Three, four, one, no three, two, three, four no one, same drill down here and then the whole school, all 1,800 students has lunch at the same time for 50 minutes. Now the folks from Cherry Hill knew this, had seen this little slide before they went to visit, and they're like yeah right. They all have lunch at the same time, okay. The whole school, 1,800 kids this is a rural regional high school. They have open campus during lunch for their seniors, but you can't get anywhere and get back in 50 minutes okay. So kids would go across the street to the field across the street and look at the school saying yeah we got open campus. And they finally stopped bothering, stayed at school you know. So, by the way 95 percent of the high schools in the country are still closed campus.

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Dr. Rettig: Although still closed campus, although you know, I work in a number of places where like I'm working at [Maranac High School in Westchester County ?] right now. They got a nine period day, but most kids, see one of them is lunch, most kids only take six and a half classes. Six and a half credits, which means they have one and a half credits average of unscheduled time, and they have no study halls. If you don't have a class you can be in the hall, you can be in the library, you can leave campus, you can you understand what I'm saying? Anybody got it, doing that? Remember that girl talking about senior privilege in that school? The senior privilege was if you had a study hall you didn't have to go to it, you could, if you had an open period it was your open free period. You had a free period in your schedule. It's, we're real scared of that in this country, we're litigious, we worry about all the problems that could happen in it.

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Dr. Rettig: But frankly in my belief to ever do anything radically different in high school scheduling we're gonna have to accept that kids are not gonna be locked 30 to a teacher all day long you know. And that's a hard pill to swallow yeah very hard pill to swallow. By the way that's the way it is in Europe and in Asia, if a kid has a free class period in Europe or Asia they don't have study halls. They go down to the café, they leave campus, they come back for their classes. They do all that, we're the only place I know that lock them up when they don't have a class you know. I mean it's true, you know, if you look at the new models they're talking about for high school scheduling, you know, there is a book out called teaching the digital generation it's by Ian Jukes and others. He's crazy, but it's a very interesting book. If you've ever seen, anybody ever seen Ian Jukes present? He was, he was nuts, but very clever. They talk about, about ten different models none of them are lock them up in the room all day.

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Dr. Rettig: They have small group/large group instruction, they have significant free time and collaborative work for students outside of class that's done, they have online stuff built into them, all those models have all these varied things where kids are not locked up all. And something is gonna have to happen to that model I think whether it's period or block, but, so the whole school has off at the same time. They have satellite serving areas all around the building where kids can pick up a sandwich, or pizza, or salad or something like that. A lot of teachers have lunch bunches, they don't have to they're not required to, but they have kids that come into their room. Some teachers when they're getting ready for a test they'll run a test prep session during part of that lunch period you know what I mean? They couldn't require an IE period, it was gonna count as one of their teaching periods. New Jersey is probably the strongest union state, New York or New Jersey, you know, any IE period was gonna count as one of their teaching loads and so that was not gonna fly.

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Dr. Rettig: And so what happens of course is teachers want to help kids, and if you give them a place where it's pretty easy to do it, not before school or after school, or that, and they can get access to their kids a lot of teachers just do it out of the goodness of their hearts. And that's what started happening in that lunch period right there, you could see it happening couldn't you? My kids when they went to Western Albemarle, when they first went there they had a 50-minute lunch period too. The whole school was off at the same time. Teachers had office hours, two or three times a week for part of that lunch period where kids could go and get extra help. Everybody loved it, I don't think they have it anymore but everybody loved that. So the folks at Cherry Hill went and saw this, saw what they were doing with it, came back and said, well whatever we do with the schedule we want unit lunch too okay. So the skeptical group became very interested in it, and so the, they had another straw poll.

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Dr. Rettig: And we ended up, well we had our first straw poll, no, no, no. Where are we here? We, oh we had our next straw poll, which was eight AB and an IE and a unit lunch, eight single periods, block hybrid with IE and unit lunch on the block days. Which is like that, like that single period schedule and then this is the hybrid, single periods three days a week and then blocks two days a week with an IE period. That's what that is, that was the other one. And then the Horace Greeley one, which was essentially this, which is the drop two on four days, and the block schedule on two days like you saw with Wissahickon, and an IE period only on the blocked days.

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Dr. Rettig: So we ended up having that straw poll, and the Horace Greeley model won, so they were gonna have the four day drop and the two day block with the IE period. Then there was one last vote. One last vote, because there was a debate in the school, should we go on the six day model with four days of periods and two days of blocks? Or should we just do the four-day rotation with the drop? And the history in this particular school was that science had gotten extra time, and in, in Cherry Hill it was very interesting, science got extra time. And how did they get extra time? It came out of electives, so to get a lab period in science they'd miss your Latin class once a week to go get their lab period in chemistry. Or they'd miss your music class to get their lab period, do you understand what I mean? They didn't schedule a slot for it, they created a second-class citizenry of classes, you see what I'm talking about there?

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Dr. Rettig: And so now that we had a lab period built in in the six period day every class would get a lab period once every six days in this, and so they voted for that. And so the schedule that they ended up with was this Cherry Hill thing, and the reason I show this to you is cause I've worked with a few schools who have created high schools that have created this block in the middle of the day. And it might not look exactly like that, for

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example at Rocky Mountain High School out in Poudre, Poudre Valley, Colorado let me find theirs.... So if you look at...this right here.

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Dr. Rettig: At Rocky Mountain High school they run a four by four schedule, they've got an 80 minute block in the middle of the day that is lunch and an Rtl period. It's kind of there, right in the middle of the day they run 80 minute, or 85 minute blocks, four of them, and then in the middle of the day there is two periods, 40 minutes each. And one could be your lunch, and one could be an intervention or vice versa. There could be enrichment opportunities in here too, so they do that. And they bounce IE off lunch, and offer different things in each half of the period, with lunch, by the way kids who don't need an intervention in this particular school are allowed to leave and have a nice 80 minute lunch. But I'm not a fan of that. Another school I'll show you is there is a school in North Carolina, it's Chatham Central.

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Dr. Rettig: And Chatham Central has what they call in the middle of their day a power hour. They call it their power hour, and so there is about 600 kids in the school. Empower hour, the empower hour, and what they do is they have from 11 to 11:30 they run study sessions, from 11:30 to 12:00 they run activities sections, and in both halves of that they also run lunch. So a kid could have lunch and a study session, or lunch and an activity session, or you understand what I'm talking about? The whole school has the same hour off at the same time, they have a sign up system for it, they use Moodle, they dump all their student management stuff into Moodle, which is a pain. And then they have an add on to that, it's called face to face, which allows teachers to create little mini courses and students to sign up for it, then they can take attendance in them and all that.

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Dr. Rettig: And those change pretty regularly, and that's what they're doing with it. So there is that, so some people do this hour in the middle of the day and do some different things with it. That's kind of interesting, a few other things and then I'm gonna move on. The, I wanted to show you a couple of other things that I've gotten from different schools of what they're trying to do with this period at the high school level. I'm looking for something that says tutorial schedule. Oh there it is, this is Mill Creek High School in Eerie, Pennsylvania. And they created a calendar where Monday, Wednesday, and Friday they run tutorials. Tuesday is an activity period day, and Wednesday they run what they call class meetings and departmental meetings at the same time. I'm not sure of the exact structure of that. It sort of morphs throughout the year into different things.

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Dr. Rettig: They support kids in their grad projects, there are mentoring things that occur, when they're doing performances they'll run their assemblies for music during this time. But they created a whole year's calendar, it's a 4,000 kid school, so it's a pretty massive undertaking for them. I think the basic structure of it is something I'm not a big fan of, and that is that I believe every teacher has a tutorial group that is assigned as their home base tutorial group during this period, and then if a kid needs help in another area they have to get a pass to go to get that. the problem with that being that then a teacher is babysitting as well as providing tutorial you understand? So I'm much more a fan of the kind of sign up system where everybody goes somewhere, and if I'm doing an algebra intervention I'm not baby sitting ten kids who are still stuck in my room while I'm trying to do that. I don't think that works very well. And, and lots of people have proven it doesn't work very well so there is that.

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Dr. Rettig: I think that's enough of that. Ask me a question huh?... I'm sure they'd blow it off probably, in their calendar which was done by days of the calendar I'm sure if they missed something they just missed it. Now if it was a concert or something they'd probably move it. In the A to F rotation, you know, a lot of, people always ask me why do they have a six day rotation in, in like, in, in Pennsylvania there? A lot of schools are on rotational schedules and share encore staff on a six-day rotation. They wanted to makes rue they, whatever they ran in the IE period they had the right people in the building for it, so they did it that way. There is no magic to that at all, and so in schools that run t hose kind of rotations if they have a snow day they tend to have the day they were going to have when they missed it. So if we were gonna have E day, and it snowed we'd have E day when we come back so everything stays on the same pattern.

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Dr. Rettig: It's just like you guys on AB block schedules, most people if they were gonna have day two and it snows they have day two when they come back so that kids preparation for those courses you don't do it that way you blow off the day, most places do. Because they want to keep everybody's prepared for that day, they'd done the homework for that day and all that kind of stuff. I don't know that there is any right answer with it. The, the challenges of the high school, by the way my vision of high school Rtl, tier one is either in the class or a touch base during an IE period once or twice a cycle whenever. Tier two is a regularly scheduled class that meets for two or three times a cycle for say six weeks or something until you test out of it, that's tier two within the IE period. Tier three is a replacement class in the regular schedule for an elective, so you understand what I'm saying tier three is done as a replacement class for an elective in the regular schedule.

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Dr. Rettig: So that's kind of my high school vision of that. Hope you got some ideas, middle school. I didn't forget about you. By the way a lot of what I've done with the high school IE period can sort of apply, except guess what you're not gonna have them sign up every six days you know, or something like that. I want to be more flexible. By the way one of the reasons I love that locus of control with the students is because one of the things we're supposed to be doing with our high school students is teaching them to be self-directed learners. And how do we do that usually? Tell them what to do every minute of the day, you know, so I don't know. At the middle school level the intervention enrichment period is scheduled different ways, and I think that's what I'm gonna start with. And then I'm gonna back into it with different models of middle school scheduling. So let me find this.

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Dr. Rettig: Okay middle school handouts. Where are my IEs? Come on. Oh there it is, so at the middle school level we have three sort of conceptual options for scheduling the intervention period if we're gonna have it. By the way most schools that don't have an intervention period, both tier two and tier three interventions are pullouts out of encore. One where, do you know what I'm saying? They're replacing an encore class, so a kid needs more reading they're taking a kid out of encore to get it. Either the tier two or the tier three are coming out if you don't have an intervention period that's what happened. The middle school model of RtI is again tier one, differentiation within regular class instruction.

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Dr. Rettig: Tier two, intervention period. Tier three, in my mind replacement of an encore class. Okay, what we like to do if we have an intervention period is reduce the number of kids that need to get replaced in encore class, so that they can take advantage of those encore classes. And the three conceptual models for doing it is you can do a school wide period, or you can do a grade level period that's different for each grade level, or if you're teamed, you can do team based periods too for intervention. So if you look at this example right here, I'm showing a period at the beginning of the day. I have met some middle school principals who swear by this, they love starting the day this. They regroup across the whole school, they do a reading intervention or something like that, and they, they like it. I tend to be skeptical, just because of when it is. I think it's an invitation to parents and students to be tardy or to schedule orthodontic appointments you know at that, at that time.

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Dr. Rettig: And so, but I do have some principals who say all our kids come on the bus, it's not a problem what you just said. We like to start the day this way. It's a good way to get everybody academically on track, and we do our reorganization and regrouping right there. I've met some places that will do their school wide period all at the end of the day.

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Okay, usually when I run into that it's been in Pennsylvania, and they're doing it to buffer their athletic program. Because, you know, they have kids who are leaving to go for interscholastic games, and if they put that period there that's all they miss instead of part of core instruction. And so they were okay with that, or they're also running the band in there too, and you know, they're trying to run band and intervention at the same time. They've got the school wide thing going on, I'm not, I'm not a fan. Again it's a, the end of the day, we're tired, I think we're inviting problems with that. I tend to be a greater fan of putting the period if we're gonna have a school wide period in a place, in the middle of the day somewhere.

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Dr. Rettig: So it could be after, if we're on a block type schedule, first block, second block third block any of those places. Now why would we do a school wide period in the middle school? Remember in the elementary school we didn't do a, we didn't hardly ever do a school wide period. We did one for every grade level, because we had staff that we could put into there who we could use as a swat team of interventionists that we wanted to spread throughout the day. The same idea applies to middle school. In my experience though we tend to have less people to be on that swat team in middle schools than we do in elementary schools. Do you know what I'm saying? We tend to, we don't have, if we've got a reading specialist you know, we might have one, we might be lucky we probably don't have a math person. We usually assign our special Ed teachers to grade, I mean you know, if you had a swat team there might be some reason to spread it out. But if you don't then there is probably some pretty good reasons for having a school wide one.

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Dr. Rettig: One of the reasons would be the availability of my encore teachers to participate in that period as well. Usually as people doing some kind of enrichment activity for students. Am I making sense here? So you know, I'm just showing this intermediate period here, period there, period there okay. You could do it any of those ways. The next way to think about doing it is maybe we do different grade level ones, and that's what each of these are here. I'm showing eighth grade with a period here, seventh here, sixth here, the reason for that of course would be I've got some people who can work in all three of those periods. If I did it that way, that would be the reason for it. So some schools will do that if they have that set of people. Another thing I like to do if I'm gonna build separate ones per grade level is sort of create my lunch schedule with IE, and so you look at this schedule right here.

01:00:02

Dr. Rettig: Where we've got a 40 minute lunch for sixth grade, and a 40 minute IE period for sixth grade, and the reverse for seventh. And then this for eight, I've really got a nice lunch schedule in here too, because I've got sixth, seventh, eight, see what I'm talking

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about. I don't have time between, gets it over in two hours. I've got my IE periods are separate. If my encore teachers work with the eighth grade in this block, the seventh grade in this block, the sixth grade in this block, then my encore teacher is available here. Now that should be their planning and their lunch, but they'd be available for one of the IE periods, so I can assign a third of my encore teachers to this period, and a third to that one, and a third to that one. I'm talking fast, am I making any sense here, you middle school you following what I'm talking about? You know, by the way I've done something interesting with my encore teachers. Sometimes I don't assign them to a group.

01:01:00

Dr. Rettig: In a couple schools in Ohio we had a school wide intervention period. My encore teachers became a SWAT team. Here is what they did, on Monday they replaced what all language arts teachers were doing during the independent, intervention period. Whether or not language arts teacher was doing enrichment or intervention on Monday an encore teacher came in, didn't do what they did, they gave the kids an enrichment opportunity in their field. So if the art teacher came in they did an art activity with kids, and the kids would get four days of their intervention. On Tuesday that same team of teachers went and replaced all my math teachers, and on Wednesday they replaced all the social studies teachers, and on Thursdays they replaced whatever the science teachers were doing. What was I trying to accomplish with that? Vertical teaming of the department within the school, any of you getting sixth, seventh and eighth grade math teachers together very often?

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Dr. Rettig: Or sixth, seventh and eighth, you understand what I'm talking about here? Am I making any sense, so we used the encore teachers as a SWAT team kind of, and they did an enrichment opportunity so whatever enrichment or intervention the teachers were doing the kids only got four days out of five that week, and they got some other activity the other day. That was very interesting, and it allowed us to do that vertical teaming within, within the middle school department vertical teaming. So that, that only works well if you do a school wide period, and so we can do these separate grade level ones, and we can then I've even worked some places, large middle schools, where we have a couple of different teams at each grade level, and we end up with two periods per each grade level spread throughout the day. So I could have a SWAT team of people work here, then here, then here, then here, then here, and hit, get lots of attention provided to the students who need extra help during the IE period.

01:03:08

Dr. Rettig: Scheduling the IE period is easy in middle school compared to making it work as well, anybody in middle school trying to do an IE period right now, got one built in? Yeah, how are you structured? Yeah, I know I schedule it, I know I made suggestions I

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never know what actually happens. At, at the middle school or is it elementary? Five-eight building, so you have four of them one for each grade level? And you have people that work who travel from of those to the next, to the next, to the next and then they join the team of core teachers in there?

01:04:00

Dr. Rettig: ...What's the structure? What's the sort of pattern of regrouping that occurs within that? how are students assigned to different things? Do they have any choice if they're not getting an intervention? They're assigned....everybody is in an intervention or enrichment group in literacy, and you're adding more bodies to it so you get your group size down a bit. And so that's the major focus okay, somebody else have an intervention period in the middle school? Over here, how is yours structured?... And so some of your encore teachers are available during each of those three periods?

01:05:00

Dr. Rettig: You, you schedule them so they have an open period beyond their planning time in that time, and do you rotate how they're assigned to the different grade levels or do they stay with that grade level the whole year?... You can save a period here or there right.... You're always trading, you want small intervention groups you're gonna have large something else you know, so okay. So one of the ways, you know, the way I kind of think about this is the structure of it is very similar to the, the way I think about the elementary structure.

01:06:00

Dr. Rettig: So let me find my middle school template, there it is.... You know, say I had you know, this is very similar to what I did with elementary with five core classroom teachers, and say I got a language arts, math, social studies, and science teacher and that's my team. And say we got 100 kids, again the way I'd be thinking about this would be similar to the way I did with the elementary in a way in that well about 80 percent of those kids tier one, in my perfect little school, and I got to have a place for them to go. So I'm gonna need to have three places for them to go.

01:07:02

Dr. Rettig: Now I'd love to be able to hold back my language arts and math teachers to do interventions in smaller groups, so it would be nice if I could have a social studies, a social studies enrichment group and a science enrichment group, but that's only two. Now if I can get assigned at least one encore teacher over here to do another enrichment activity with students I could do the same kind of thing I was doing at the elementary level where we could have a three wee kind of rotation that existed where, you know, kids might get three weeks of social studies enrichment unit, three weeks of science enrichment unit, and three weeks of an encore teachers enrichment unit. And say for this nine weeks the art teacher is assigned to us. Well it might be the next nine

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weeks I have a different encore teacher assigned to us, a music teacher or a family consumer science teacher, something like that.

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Dr. Rettig: So that the enrichment that kids would get would change over the year, it might be a quarter of art, a quarter of tech, a quarter, am I making any sense here? But what I'm trying to do is preserve some intervention folks beyond who might be able to be added you know. Now if I have 20 kids here and I've got a language arts and math teacher, and if we have a reading specialist, if we have a special Ed. teacher, whatever we have, you know, I'm starting to get my numbers down the way you're kind of talking back there at your school. So I'd be thinking something like that. I worked in [Hartson?], Ohio and we built something very similar to that where also in the school the, the district got together and had their social studies people write these enrichment units, and the science people write the enrichment units. So that's a way to do it. Somebody else in middle school have a intervention period, you got another way you structure it, whatcha doing?

01:09:00

Dr. Rettig: ...You haven't had any problems with it? They can't go anywhere and they don't drive right.... You want, they're doing the enrichments right....

01:10:00

Dr. Rettig: But in terms of enrichment you give them a choice.... Some people would try to get around the problem you described there by having things meet every other day, and so a kid could get an intervention on one day but an enrichment on the other day unless they were...enrichments....

01:11:00

Dr. Rettig: ...I get it. I like it.

01:12:00

Dr. Rettig: ...An advisory one day a week, an advisory one day a week. No? What is it? Oh, but it could be advisory one day a week....

01:13:00

Dr. Rettig: Right, I, by the way that's a good point to make. I've found that most schools two, or three, or even fours years to make it sing. It takes, this takes a lot of work, and you made another comment that I really do believe in. You know, people look at that high school model I showed earlier, and they think oh god, discipline problems out the wazoo. And I think, you know what? Are we gonna not do stuff for the 95 percent of our

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kids, and just not do stuff for the 5 percent who are knuckleheads. You know, so you need the responsibility room then to take care of the knuckleheads at some point I think, and I don't think it's even that pejorative. I mean you can stop being a knucklehead if you want....

01:14:00

Dr. Rettig: ...I do like the idea of an academic enrichment that is, might be connected to a subject somehow. And, and I think your program would be better and lots would be better if the people designing those enrichments purposefully looked at your data and saw, found objectives that would take students to that higher level of achievement. And infuse those enrichment activities, do you understand what I'm talking about? I think that would be better, but I certainly, anybody who is doing this kind of thing has to go through the thinking process that you just shared with us for how to structure it and organize it, and take care of the tiers as well as the other problems that you've described there. And there is a lot of ways to do it, it is just really hard work. You know, it's really hard work I think, and again if there were ways we could give our teachers an occasional extra little time to work on that it would be much appreciated by them.

01:15:06

Dr. Rettig: I'd like to talk briefly about the questions I get about middle school scheduling are I, the first one, the biggest one I get is we're trying to do RtI. How do you do RtI in middle school? Okay, so you have both of the things we've talked about here, how to schedule it, who to organize it once you get scheduled we talk about that. But on the other side I also get questions like this, we're not doing that well in our state testing. I'm not sure we have enough time for core instruction. How do we increase our time for core instruction without totally eviscerating the elective program and exploratory program we have in our school? Does that sound familiar at all? I get that question a lot around the country, not so much in Virginia as I would outside Virginia where they often get far less core instructional time. Let me pose a question to you.

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Dr. Rettig: And everybody can answer it, I think it's the elemental question behind middle school scheduling in a way, and that is what percentage of the day do you think middle school students should spend in the following activities: language arts including reading, math, science, and social studies? What percentage of their day do you think middle school students should spend in those activities in aggregate? So put that percentage in your head, is it 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 75, 80? What is it? The aggregate now I'm going to count to three in a minute and I'd like for everybody to call out. Here we go, one, two, three, I heard 60, I heard 80, I heard 75, I heard 70, the number I hear the most around the country for middle school is 75 percent. That's what I hear the most around the country, okay.

01:17:01

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Dr. Rettig: Now there are different ways to divide up the core. So let's say we had agreed on 75 percent it ought to be, then my, my corollary question to that is, well how should it be divided among the core subjects that 75 percent of the time? You understand what I'm saying? Should it be equally, or do other, do some cores deserve more and need more time than others? The answer I most often hear is some cores need more time than others. The one that we've traditionally done more time with all around the country is language arts, often language arts gets two periods or a block. Sometimes math does, we'll talk about that in a minute. But I'm running around to a lot of schools around the country right now are sitting around with 42 or 45 minutes of math every day and they're not cutting it at all. And you know, most of the math programs we have out there right now are looking for a minimum of 60 even at the middle school level to do the math program.

01:18:05

Dr. Rettig: And they're sitting with less than that. So let's think about the ways that we can divide up the core time, and I want to show you some different options that exist in the regular schedule. We can certainly build the intervention period into that too, so let me pop something up here. Okay...oh where is this?

01:19:00

Dr. Rettig: I thought I had a slide listing them, okay. Let's talk about the ways that we can do it. The first way I work with some schools, the way they divide the core up is they divide it equally. Does anybody in, in middle schools in here give equal amounts of time to language arts, math, science and social studies? Equal amounts of time to language arts, math, science and social studies, so for example if we were on a six period day we might have four core periods and two encore periods. Or, we might have four core periods that were 60 minutes long and two encore periods that were 45 minutes long. Cause some people will take their day and they'll divide it up in such a way that they have unequal periods in their schedule, like, like that.

01:20:02

Dr. Rettig: They'll take 75 percent of the school day and divide it up and give equal amounts of time to language arts, math, science and social studies, but their encore periods will be a different length. Does anybody have a schedule like that where your core periods are longer than your encore periods? You run a straight six period day or a straight seven period? Now in your seven period day do kids only have four core classes? So, huh? For some get extra time, okay but the basic schedule is four out of seven classes, one isn't lunch is it? No, so there is three other courses plus lunch. One is lunch, so it's only six courses kids take, but they're all equal length. Right, right, right, right, right, so and they're all equal periods, so if I were to compute the percentage of your time that's spent in the basic core for most kids it would be four out of seven.

01:21:06

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Dr. Rettig: Which is 57 percent, I'd be worried. I, yeah. Yeah I'd be worried, 57 percent okay. There is no right answer by the way, if your kids are doing fine I guess it's okay you know, but 57 percent a lot of people would be worried about that. Other, so some people will divide the core equally, and they'll run a schedule where the core periods are longer than encore periods. Other people decide that one of these subjects needs more time than others, so they'll divide this schedule so that language arts gets two periods. Where is this? I feel like I'm in the wrong handout here.

01:22:00

Dr. Rettig: Well it's not that, I feel like I'm in the wrong handout. Where language arts gets two periods, so you think a seven period day that many schools utilize, they'll have two language arts periods, one math, one science, one social studies and two encores. Often in that schedule where teachers teach five class periods though students have two different teachers for language arts and reading in there, because five is an ugly number in scheduling, anybody know what I'm talking about? Okay so we have that way to divide it, and I'm losing steam here.... This is the sample of equal core periods, four of them and two equal encore periods that are shorter.

01:23:01

Dr. Rettig: I've seen that. The most common schedule that I've seen in Virginia though is a variant on the four by four done at the high school level, and so the basic plan for that schedule is this. Where 75 percent of the time is spent in the core with a block of language arts every day, a block of math every day, science and social studies alternate in some fashion, and then there is a block that is devoted to the encore often divided into two periods. Is there anybody out there that is running this schedule right now? It's a very common schedule in our state. Now some schools I'll work with that run this schedule also put an intervention period into the schedule okay, if they have a long enough school day. So I worked with this school in Wisconsin in the fall, and here is their schedule.

01:24:05

Dr. Rettig: I wonder why that keeps coming up.... So if you look what we did here they have a seven, what time is that my goodness see over here, 7:50 to 3:00 day, is that 7:50? Yeah, 7:50 to 3:00 so for seven hours and ten minutes we run one, two, three, 83 minute blocks for the academic classes, one is devoted to language arts, one is devoted to math, one is shared by science and social studies.

01:25:03

Dr. Rettig: We run an encore schedule two periods for each grade level, this happened to be a five through eight school, so the encore blocks for eighth grade are here, for seventh grade here, for fifth grade here, and for sixth grade here. And then half the school has, a quarter of the school has lunch/recess while another quarter of the school

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has recess/lunch, while half the school has IE. And the while these guys have IE the lunch/recess flip flop, is that making any sense, do you see how that works in there? And so none of the blocks are split and the IE is built around the lunch periods in there. And we came up with a pattern of their encore classes here, the basic format for academics in this schedule, the teaming structure for it, you know, is the perfect teaming structure for this is a six teacher team.

01:26:00

Dr. Rettig: That works the best, and in the six teacher team you have two language arts teachers, two math teachers, a social studies and a science teacher. Kids get a block of language arts daily, a block of math daily, and an alternation of science and social studies daily. Some places I've worked with this have done it in periods, other places I've worked with alternate science and social studies every other day, and other places I've worked with in Virginia especially do it by semester. One semester of social studies and one semester of science. And the reasons I show this schedule, one of the questions any school has to ask itself as they go through the RtI process is if our numbers of students is so great needing interventions is our universal instruction sufficient for most students?

01:27:05

Dr. Rettig: If your kids are only getting 50 minutes of language arts a day, and 50 minutes of math a day, and you got a lot of kids needing intervention in language arts and math perhaps your universal instruction is insufficient for all students. Am I making any sense? Do you know what I'm talking about there, so in these schedules, in this, this model where kids get, you know, 90 minutes of language arts daily, 90 minutes of math daily that ought to be sufficient for universal instruction you would think. It comes at a cost though, you're taking something else out, you're shortening something else. Of the schools that do this schedule how many of you semesterize science and social studies? Do you? Does it work for you? Your kids doing okay in it? Language arts and math, not as proficient, I think the results I saw in the state that kids who did it both semesterized were doing okay, were doing about the same.

01:28:01

Dr. Rettig: Anybody else semester, why would you semesterize science and social studies in here by the way? What would be the advantage of doing it? Huh? No, not really, I mean this is just a different staffing model. I need two language arts teachers and two math teachers for every one social studies and one science in here. So it's not the traditional four-teacher kind of team that you have. The advantage of semesterizing it is if you look at the math, language arts teachers job in this schedule, I work with three groups per year, every day, it's lovely. If I'm a math teacher I work with three groups per year, it's lovely. If I'm a science or social studies teacher how many groups do I work with per year? Six, not as lovely.

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Dr. Rettig: And so if I alternate them every other day at least they got three one day three the next, a little better. But if I alternate them by semester I feel more like the language arts and math teachers, I got three groups one semester and three the next. Are there negatives do it? Yes. There are some seasonal things in those schedules, by the way another good thing about it is they could take one of the SOL tests the first semester, and then not have all four, you know, I forget what grade levels we're testing in in Virginia these days, but that is an advantage. You reduce kids' load too, cause if you semesterize them a kid is taking language arts, math and either science or social studies, which reduces their load. Let me tell you an interesting story about a school in New York, just to give you something different than is more typical in, in Virginia. I worked in Chappaqua with their middle schools last year.

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Dr. Rettig: And we came up with a new schedule for the district.... Before I tell you, show you this let me tell you what they were on, the typical middle school schedule in the Northeast is this, eight period day plus lunch. In Chappaqua what they had was 40 minutes of English daily, 40 minutes of math daily, 40 minutes of social studies daily, 40 minutes of science daily, and 40 minutes of what I'll call a funny period where they did a little more literacy and a little more, some other things but it was under the control of the team. They sort of organized it, some interventions were occurring there.

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Dr. Rettig: The other three periods world language for 95 percent of the kids beginning in sixth grade daily, a PE/music period that meets every other day, PE one day music the next. Everybody is in band, orchestra, choir or general music and those meet every other day, and a third period was a nine-week rotation of classes. A family consumer science, technology, health and art okay, you following it? Four of eight periods in the basic core, 40 minutes of language arts daily, 40 minutes of math daily, and now this is Chappaqua, I don't know if you know Chappaqua. Chappaqua is where the Clintons live, and I'm not sure the kids need to go to school there cause the gene pool is pretty strong, but, but still their superintendent was from Florida and she didn't like 40 minutes at a pop, and she's very sharp, and she wanted to increase the instructional time kids were getting in the core areas.

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Dr. Rettig: They were not happy with the short periods, and so we came up with a schedule that was, we went to a six period day. Now they had some contractual limitations too, teachers were only allowed to teach 225 minutes a day, 225. And they were only teaching 200, cause they had five 40-minute periods, they were only teaching 200 so it was trying to get it closer to the 225. You know, can you imagine you're yanking down 120 for three hours and twenty minutes of work, of face time with kids. I

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know there is more work, but you know what I mean. I think I'll un-retire. So we build this schedule where now we have four 55 minute periods for core, and two 55 minutes for encore. Now that is a tremendous increase in the amount of core instruction kids were getting from 40 to 55 minutes daily.

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Dr. Rettig: But what had we done? We went from three encore periods to two encore periods, so what are you gonna do with that the band, the PE, the rotational classes? How are you gonna fit all that in? cause I tell you in this kind of community choice is pretty important, and getting kids everything they want is pretty important. They howl if it's not, they're not able to get it. So what'd we do? We changed the way we rotate classes, and we constructed an encore rotation that looks well, looks like, not that, like that. so if you look at this there is two encore periods, if remember PE and music used to meet every other day, now they meet one day out of three for 55 minutes.

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Dr. Rettig: Spanish, their world language class used to meet daily, now it meets two days out of three for 55 minutes. The rotational class they were taking that changed every quarter used to meet daily, but now it meets two days out of three for 55 minutes. So we didn't reduce student's choice, we reduced the frequency of what they got to get to where we wanted to get with the core instructional time. That was more amenable to the group than just cutting something out okay. And the result of that in terms of increased instructional time is I have a little chart here, where is that, Cherry Hill wrong thing.

01:35:00

Dr. Rettig: I have a little chart with time comparisons, if you look at this chart it's kind of a useful little tool. English, they used to get 180 minutes, meetings of 40 minutes for a total 7,200 minutes, and now they got 180 for 55, a total of 9,900, it was an increase of 45 hours of English instruction per year, an increase of 45 hours of math, and science an social studies. They lost what I'll call the funny period, that's gone. World language went from 80-40s, to 120-55s, only ten hours loss. Band, orchestra, choir, general music went from 90-40s to 60-55s, a five hour loss of instruction, am I making any sense here? And when they, this chart was a powerful tool to say okay these gains here are worth these compromises down here.

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Dr. Rettig: How do you middle schools organize your time? You told me you're on a six period, seven period day right with the four cores, a number of you are on the four block, you're doing an AB type schedule? Eight AB?... But your kids have math every other day for a block?... It's called what? I know why.

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Dr. Rettig: ...But only for some kids, right? Oh so it's a, it's similar to what I've been talking about a block of language arts, and a block of math, alternating science and social studies, two encore blocks right, that alternate. Right. Well if you want this little chart you can do your little calculations with it, but you know, everything has got a trade off. Everything has a trade off, and we didn't reduce choice here but we certainly reduced frequency. Believe me the world language people although they liked the increase instructional time to 55 minutes they were not wild about going from 180 meetings to 120 meetings per year. The PE people, though they, PE is much better in a 55 minute class than it is in a 40 minute class they didn't like going to 60 meeting per year instead of 90 meetings per year.

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Dr. Rettig: So there were certainly trade offs and not everybody was happy with it, you know.... Right, ask me a question. Give me a situation, middle school. Ask me a question....

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Dr. Rettig: ...Another story that's related exactly to that, oh a number of years ago I worked in Manassas with Metz Middle School. They got a new superintendent, I don't know how they're doing right now but I'm going to talk about their schedule and what we did with it and why. They were on the schedule you're talking about, seven period day, seven 50 minute periods, kids got four periods of core language arts, math, science, social studies, 50 minutes a pop. PE every day and two elective periods, it was a seventh and eighth grade school only, 57 percent of the time in core, 43 percent of the time in encore. Their achievement was in the toilet, okay. Got a new superintendent who said, you're not doing that anymore you're doing the four-block schedule okay. Block of language arts, block of math, block of science social studies, now two periods to fit all of what had been in three periods before okay.

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Dr. Rettig: In terms of the encore, so my happy job is to work with the encore teachers okay who are going from two to thank you very much, I was looking for that, who are going from two periods to three periods. So when I think about encore at the middle school level there are certain encore classes that need to go year long just by their very nature. If you're in a performing arts group, band, orchestra or choir it's stupid to think about it being semesterized or quarterized or anything like that. PE is the same thing, should go year long, kids need physical activity. World language other than an introduction that's not a skill based thing, just a sort of exploratory thing, if you're in it should go year long. But year long doesn't mean every day.

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Dr. Rettig: It means it should continue throughout the year, it doesn't have to be every day to be year long. There are other subjects which are better off frankly for the teacher if we quarterize them or trimester them or semester them. I worked in, think about art, I was working in Pennsylvania, and their art classes met two days of every six in the middle school I was working with. That meant in one period the art teacher could work with three different groups of students over a six day period, and if they taught five periods, five times three is 15 different sections of students they'd see in a six day cycle. Where are you putting all that stuff you know. How are you dealing with all those groups at the same time. They're better off working with a group for, you know, a trimester or a quarter or semester, and then getting different groups. Better off for the kids too, they see fewer teachers at a time.

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Dr. Rettig: But my job is to work with this group of encore teachers and figure out how we're taking them down from three to two periods. So the first thing I throw up there is this, I say you know what? We could take world language, or our exploratory rotation and that could meet every day, and PE and music could meet every other day. And of course the world language period, and the exploratory folks they're, yeah that's the way to do it we should do it this way. And the PE people who had been meeting every day, and the band people who had been meeting every day they look at this and said you just ruined the program okay. Our kids are gonna be overweight, and the band boosters are gonna get hot you know. So I say, okay well maybe we don't do it that way, let's do it this way. We need to have physically fit kids we're gonna have PE every day, and we'll take our music programs and meet them every other day opposite our exploratory classes or world language.

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Dr. Rettig: But you know, if we do that it's gonna take us two years to get the number of minutes required for the Carnegie unit in world language if we do that, so we'll have to spread world language over a couple years. And the world language people not happy with that, and the band boosters are still hot over here cause that's meeting every other day, but the PE people are okay. So I say, well maybe we won't do it this way, you know, they got the band going and the band boosters got after the principal. He said, I guess we ought to have music every day, and so maybe music could meet every day and PE and world language would meet every other day. In each of the options that I provide from their perspective there were winners or losers, you know what I'm saying somebody, now I don't know what the right answer is. I know what we did there, and it worked fine, it worked okay. We went to that same sort of rotational system I showed you in Chappaqua where kids would take three classes that instead of meeting every day they met two days out of three/

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Dr. Rettig: So the way it looked in Manassas was this, if you were in PE met two days of three. If you were in world language it met two days of three. If you were in the band it met two days of three. Everybody lost some frequency, students didn't lose any choices. Now we ran into some issues with it, Spanish, world language you still couldn't get Carnegie unit credit with one year, so you had to start in seventh grade to get enough time. But it was actually a good thing, because if you think of two days out of three in a year that's 120 meetings. If they have 120 meetings in seventh grade, and 120 meetings in eighth grade that 240 meetings, that's more than the typical Carnegie unit. Maybe the folks in the high school stop complaining about the kids not being ready.

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Dr. Rettig: You know, if you give them more they don't even do that do they? We had another problem in that if a kid came into eighth grade and wanted to take world language they hadn't taken the seventh grade part how could I get them in it? And so every year it was a big school, they had 18 grade sections per grade level in seventh and eighth grade big school. We had at least one section of Spanish that met all three days, and for those kids who wanted to take Spanish in one year they missed a day of PE. They got one day of PE, three of Spanish, and then they got their two days of their other electives, that's what we did. The basic master schedule for it was pretty simple to construct, it looked something like this, let me just make it a little smaller so you can see it. If you look here we had one, two, three core blocks for twelve sections of seventh grade.

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Dr. Rettig: And their are encore periods were 55 minutes long, 55. We had another twelve sections of eighth grade, they had their encores at the beginning of the day and then their three cores and lunch later. And then if you look six sections of seventh and six sections of eighth had their encores in the middle of the day. We, to placate the encore folks a bit we made the longer encore periods than half of the core periods. And so we had to put one grade level at the beginning of the day, one grade level at the end of the day, and one grade level in the middle of the day to make that work. But the kids got a block of language arts, a block of math, and a block of science social studies, and the school got accredited, which was good. One of the things you need to think about if you were thinking to change to a schedule like this, the problem is this you're not staffed right for it.

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Dr. Rettig: If your kids are getting equal amounts of language arts, math, science and social studies you're staffed and certified to provide that. so if you're thinking about doubling their language arts and doubling their math to the single science and single social studies you don't have the right staff. Huh? And so you're gonna have to figure out how to transition to that in some way, because you need twice as many language

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arts and math teachers as you do science and social studies and right now you got equal you know. Everybody understand what I just said there? If you change the mix of academics you're trying to provide you got to change the staff you have. That's easier said than done. One of the trends I've seen in middle school scheduling in the last ten years is what I call the re-junior highing of middle schools in America.

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Dr. Rettig: You know what I'm talking about? How many of you team in eighth grade right now? Middle schools, team in eighth grade, how many of you team in seventh grade right now? A few, how many of you team in sixth grade right now? See, eighth grade teaming is almost gone in the state of Virginia. Seventh grade is on the way, sixth grade is still pretty alive, it's hard for me to believe that you're a middle school if you don't team. To me if you look at this we believe you know, to me the one non-negotiable part of middle school concept teaming. Else you're more like why? We've been forced into it, two things have forced us into it. Very restrictive certification requirements, the no child left behind high quality teacher standards, and bad budgets.

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Dr. Rettig: The combination of those two didn't allow us to run with smaller teams than we could, do you know what I, we used to when we didn't have, when we had 80 kids on the team and only four teachers okay that was fine. Now when we got 80 kids teachers got to pick up another section somewhere else, and we end up shooting them out somewhere else so it screws up our whole teaming piece.... Ask me a question, I'm done talking. I'm done pontificating anyway. So, this intervention/enrichment period is very interesting I think. It has a lot of possibilities, it can be very helpful in Rtl, it is a tremendous amount of work, two or three years to make it work well at least I think.

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Dr. Rettig: You do not want to create just another study hall in the school for kids, you want to provide something appropriate for all students in that period. I don't see how you do Rtl without it frankly, and so we got to make it work for everybody. It's a huge challenge. I hope you got a few ideas today about what you might do in your schools, I know I kind of faded out here a little bit. But so thank you very much for coming, and I appreciate it, and I hope you got some ideas....

Ms. Trulove: Thank you Dr. Rettig, this has been really an informative day. I know you're going back with lots in your head to think about getting these schedules straight. We really appreciate you being here, you've given us a wealth of resources and information and we thank you very much.

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Ms. Trulove: I want to also thank the coaches for their presentation yesterday, and all the presenters from all of our cohort divisions that participated. It's always really nice to have our homegrown people presenting too. So thank, thank you all. I can say with all certainty without any disclaimers the next training is for sure April 9th and 10th right here at the Hilton. We're still sort of, we're still figuring out what we're gonna do. We know the topics, we're gonna be looking at behavior, we're gonna have the PBIS people helping us, the CLC people helping us, and the coaches so it's gonna be a great two days and I'll give you more information but I'll put the link up a lot sooner than I did the last one.

01:52:00

Ms. Trulove: Because I can and not get in trouble. The last training is in July, let's just get all these dates out right now. The July training is the 16th and 17th, right Rick, 16th and 17th and that's going to be at the Hotel Roanoke. So ink them in for sure, and just know that I will give you the information as I get it and keep you in the loop. Call me any time about anything, and I appreciate you coming. Be careful driving home, we'll see you in April. Thank you.